

**Reading
and
Thinking
in English**

**Exploring
functions**

**Teacher's
edition**

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Reading and Thinking in English was developed in a project sponsored jointly by the University of the Andes, Bogota, Colombia, and the British Overseas Development Ministry in association with the British Council.

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Exploring Functions was revised and extended for publication in the Department of English as a Foreign Language of the University of London Institute of Education by John Moore, with the assistance of Teresa Munévar from the University of the Andes.

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Reading and Thinking in English

Reading and Thinking in English is an integrated course in reading comprehension for students of English as a foreign language. It is based on the belief that a special kind of course is required for students of English whose main need is to gain access to information through English. The course has been designed for a wide range of learners whose needs can be described as 'English for Academic Purposes'—advanced secondary school pupils preparing for tertiary education, students in universities and other tertiary institutions, adults whose profession requires them to make use of material in English. It is therefore intended to help students and others read textbooks, works of reference and general academic interest, sourcebooks and journals in English.

The series consists of four books. **Concepts in use** extends students' basic knowledge of grammar and vocabulary and how they are used to express fundamental concepts. It also develops their awareness of how passages are built on combinations of these concepts. **Exploring functions** deals with the use of concepts in the communicative functions of academic writing. **Discovering discourse** develops students' awareness of how the devices of language are used to express communicative function. It also shows how passages are built on combinations of simple functions. **Discourse in action** extends students' knowledge of the functional organization of written English and develops their ability to handle information found in varied types of real academic discourse. The series is designed so that the books in it can be used independently of the others in the series. Many intermediate or advanced learners may be able to begin with the third or fourth books. The whole series, however, provides a phased approach to the most challenging demands of academic discourse.

Self-study guide

Pre-intermediate students can use this book for study without a teacher. These notes contain some suggestions specifically for independent students.

The purpose of the book

Exploring functions is part of a course in reading comprehension. It gives practice in reading textbooks and other academic books in English. It is for students with a basic knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary. It will help you begin to read books in English for your studies.

The contents of the book

1 **Exploring functions** is concerned with the use of basic English to communicate information in written passages. It introduces ways of presenting information in written passages. These ways are:

- Giving instructions (Unit 2)
- Describing how things work (Unit 3)
- Reporting series of events (Unit 4)
- Generalizing and exemplifying (Unit 6)
- Making comparisons (Unit 7)
- Giving explanations (Unit 8)

Each unit therefore introduces a different way of presenting information. Each unit also practises the basic grammar and vocabulary used to present information in this way. For example: Unit 7 develops the ability to understand passages which make comparisons. It practises the basic grammar and vocabulary used to express similarities and differences.

2 Each unit contains the following parts:

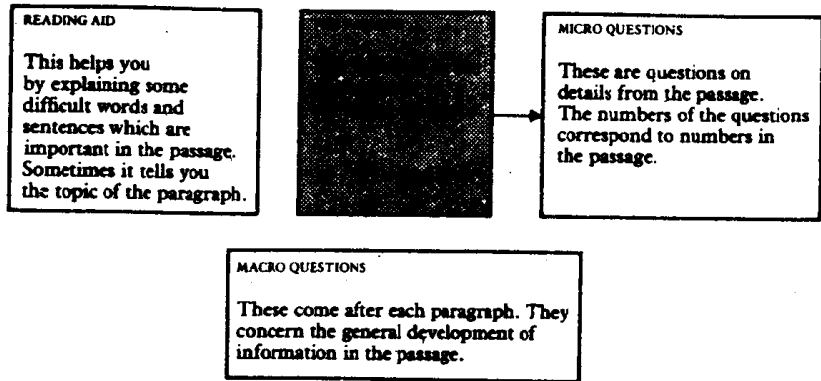
Part 1 Presentation This part contains an introductory reading passage. For example, in Unit 3, Part 1 presents a simple description of how things work. This part gives a general idea of the content of the unit. It therefore includes a short summary of the main points of the unit.

Parts 2 and 3. These parts practise important grammar and vocabulary. The grammar and vocabulary are used to present information in a particular way. For example in Unit 3, Parts 2 and 3 present the grammar and vocabulary necessary to describe how things work. They therefore practise ways of expressing the *structure* of things and *functions* of things. Parts 2 and 3 also contain summaries. These list the important expressions and show how they are used.

Part 4 Development This part contains a more complex reading passage. Before the reading passage there is an introduction. This helps you understand some of the key information from the passage. The practice of the passage is arranged in the following way:

PURPOSE QUESTION.

This gives you a particular piece of information to look for when you read the passage for the first time.



3 Unit 1 is an introduction to the purpose and methods of the book.
Unit 5 is a review of the first part of the book.
Unit 8 also contains a comprehensive review of the whole book.

4 You will need, in addition to the book:
-a dictionary from English to your own language.
-a notebook. Write the answers to all the questions and write up the activities in your notebook.

How to study each unit

Part 1

Study the diagram and note the topic of the introductory passage. Think how it relates to the title of the unit. Read question 1. This gives you a purpose for reading the passage. Read the passage rapidly and answer question 1. Check your answer in the key. Read the passage again, more carefully. Use your dictionary if necessary. Answer the other questions on the passage, then check your answers in the key. (Remember to write all your answers in your notebook.) Read the summary carefully. If you wish, copy it in your notebook. Make sure you understand it before you continue.

Part 2

Study the passage in the same way as you studied the passage in Part 1. Study the summary and see if you can find more examples of the expressions in the passage. Study the activity. Before you begin to write look up any new words in your dictionary. Make sure you read the examples carefully and that you understand how to write the statements. Write the activity in your notebook, then check your answers carefully. Correct any mistakes you have made.

HOW TO STUDY EACH UNIT

Part 3

Study this part in the same way as you studied Part 2. Note that Activity 3 presents grammar introduced in Parts 2 and 3: it is a review of the grammar of the whole unit. Study it carefully before you write in your notebook. Check your answers. If you have made mistakes refer back to the relevant part of the unit.

Part 4

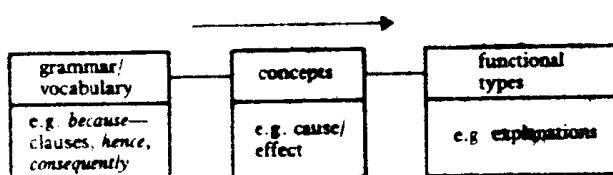
Study the introduction carefully. Make sure you understand it fully before you continue. In Units 6, 7 and 8 the introduction contains questions. Check your answers before you continue. You will find at the beginning of Part 4 of each unit instructions on how to study the part. Follow these carefully. Check your answers to each type of question before you continue.

Teacher's guide

1 Purpose and approach

Exploring functions is intended for the pre-intermediate learner who needs to put his English to use, particularly for reading books connected with his studies. It is intended to provide material for a 3–6 month course (depending on the intensity of the classes and the study time available) for students with a low intermediate command of English who wish to read books and journals in English. One of the problems facing this type of learner is that his language instruction usually exposes him to extremely simplified and artificial passages of English, whereas his actual reading experiences confront him with a whole range of problems of understanding. This book does not claim to turn such a student into a fluent reader of unsimplified English overnight. It does, however, provide a path which will take him from his classroom English towards the actual English of textbooks, journals, newspapers etc. The book therefore assumes that the learner is familiar with the kind of basic grammar and vocabulary included in normal first-year English courses. It aims to show the learner how he can use even a limited command of the resources of English to read with understanding on a wide range of topics. The authors believe that the learner at this stage is capable of understanding simple grammatical patterns in isolation and that he needs to discover how these grammatical resources of the language are exploited in informative writing. The book is therefore concerned to bridge the gap between grammatical patterns in sentences and the linguistic features of complete passages. By so doing it also attempts to bridge the gap between the concepts which are expressed by simple grammatical patterns and the organization of information in passages. It is therefore concerned with the different ways in which writers present information in passages and how the concepts expressed by grammar are made use of in these different types of writing. For example, Unit 3 is concerned with descriptions of how things work. This type of description relates to devices, instruments, machines, organisms etc. and commonly refers to the *structure* of things and their *functions*. Unit 7 is concerned with making comparisons. Comparisons are based on the expression of *similarities* and *differences*. So each unit is concerned with a particular functional type of writing. It introduces the key concepts on which that type is based and the grammar and vocabulary which express them. This scheme can be visualized as follows:

students' learning experience \longrightarrow real-life demands



The authors believe that a course in reading comprehension for students of English as a foreign language must be based solidly on improving their command of grammar and vocabulary, but that in addition it must help students to go beyond this knowledge in order to extract information efficiently from passages. The practice activities in the book therefore concentrate on helping students to look for information in passages. One central feature of the kind of writing that students are exposed to is that information is presented not only by written passages but also by means of visuals, diagrams, tables etc. The book therefore uses these devices not only to support the written passages but also as tasks for the students to perform. In this way the student is exposed to the kind of realistic study activities he will engage in as part of his reading assignments—drawing graphs, completing tables, making summaries, consulting diagrams etc. The student will therefore be guided to see the relevance of his English practice to the reading tasks which form part of his studies. It is therefore very important that students should be encouraged to see the relevance of the book for their studies, particularly since the book does not train students in the English used in any one specialist subject area. It is expected that most students will find material in the book which will engage their interest and active participation through reading, thinking, writing and discussing. The teacher, however, may wish to include supplementary activities which apply the concepts and functions studied in the book to the particular fields of study of his students.

2 Description of the book The book consists of 8 units. Unit 1 introduces students to a range of tasks involved in reading for information. It helps to make students aware of the use of language to communicate information by showing how the resources of grammar are exploited. Thus it presents the use of grammar to express communicative functions, to convey information in different ways and to structure units of language consisting of a number of sentences. It also introduces students to two reading strategies which will enable them to read flexibly. From the very beginning of the book, therefore, the student is shown how to exploit his grammatical knowledge to the full. The remaining units are divided into two blocks:

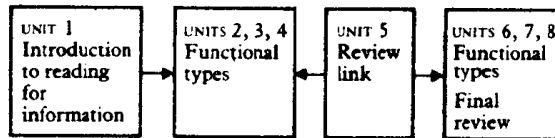
Block 1 Units 2–4 are concerned with the functions of giving instructions, describing and reporting.

Block 2 Units 6–8 are concerned with generalizing and exemplifying, comparing and explaining.

The two blocks are separated by a Review Unit (Unit 5). This not only provides a review of the functions studied in Units 2–4 but also serves as a bridging unit to help students deal with the more complex demands of the

later units. In addition, Unit 8 provides a comprehensive review of the functions studied throughout the book. An attempt is therefore made to integrate the functional types studied separately, as this integration is a feature of actual writing.

The way the different units relate can be shown as follows:



3 Structure of the units

After the first unit has prepared students for the work of the book, the units are organized in the following way:

Part 1 Presentation

This exposes the student to a set of statements or a short passage with visuals which show simply and clearly an example of the functional type being studied. For example, Unit 2 is concerned with following instructions. It therefore presents a short set of instructions on how to operate a piece of equipment. The two key concepts are systematically presented and students' attention is drawn to them and to the nature of the function itself by questions which follow the passage. These points are then summarized briefly as an *aide-memoire* at the end of the part. The presentation therefore provides an overview of the unit so that the student knows clearly what the unit as a whole is concerned with.

Parts 2 and 3

These concern the two key concepts and how they are expressed. For example, Unit 2 introduces the concept of purposes in Part 2 and the concept of method in Part 3. Each concept is introduced by a short passage which is followed by questions drawing attention to the way the concept is expressed. For example Part 2 of Unit 2 concentrates on 'to + infinitive' and *in order to* expressing purpose. These expressions are then set out in a summary which will help the student in the subsequent practice activities. Parts 2 and 3 of each unit include one practice activity on the concept studied. Part 3 of each unit also includes an activity which presents the two concepts in juxtaposition and serves as a round-up of parts 2 and 3.

Part 4 Development

In this part the student is exposed to a longer passage which develops the same functional type at greater length as well as reviewing the concepts studied. It therefore provides a link between the more highly controlled material of parts 1, 2 and 3 and the normal demands of academic writing. For example, the passage in Unit 2 is concerned with instructions on how to perform an experiment. Although the way in which this part should be handled depends on the individual unit there is a study pattern which is adopted consistently. This is as follows:

a Introduction. This presents a set of statements containing central information from the reading passage and gives the student a background for the topic of the passage in a form which can easily be assimilated. The authors believe that familiarity with the topic is essential to prepare students for the main passage. In Units 6–8 the introduction contains activities which enable the students to manipulate the information from the reading passage. Not only do they then become familiar with it but in addition they are brought to regard the passages as one way of expressing an underlying body of information.

b Purpose question. The authors believe that in the majority of reading experiences the purpose for which we are reading is an important factor in determining *how* we read. It is therefore important to train students to read rapidly for different purposes. The book therefore includes a purpose question before each passage in order to give students practice in looking for particular information. It is essential that students should not try and read passages word by word and the teacher should use this exercise to encourage them to skim rapidly through the passage, pausing only when they discover something relevant to their purpose.

c The students then study the passage in greater depth. The passage itself is set between two columns. The column on the left is a reading aid. This is designed to help the student in several ways:

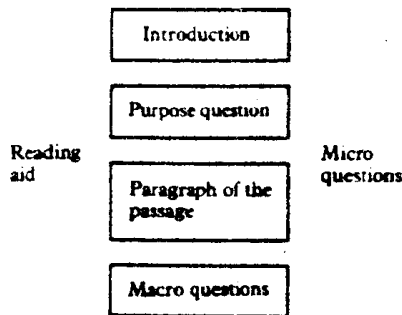
- 1 It provides explanations (by means of visuals or synonyms) of difficult vocabulary which is central for the reading.
- 2 It provides paraphrases of difficult sentences by splitting them up into simpler statements or by giving information which the passage presupposes.
- 3 It indicates the topic of a paragraph when this will help the student understand the development of information in the passage.

The column on the right contains micro questions. The questions are numbered. The numbers refer to a corresponding number in the passage. This number indicates the part of the passage to which the question relates. These questions are concerned with points of detailed understanding of the passage, particularly the following:

- 1 Textual reference. It is extremely important that students should be able to understand a writer's references to what he has already mentioned in the passage. This skill is central to following the development of information in a passage and is introduced first in the Introductory Unit. It is then practised throughout the book in the micro questions.
- 2 Understanding sentence structure. A number of questions concentrate on understanding complex sentences and the devices used to connect parts of sentences together.
- 3 Understanding information implied by the passage. For example, a concept studied in the unit may be expressed implicitly rather than explicitly.

d After each paragraph of the passage there are macro questions. These relate not just to details given in the passage but to the development of information throughout a paragraph. They practise the ability to extract the important information from the passage and reorganize it in the form of summaries, diagrams, tables etc.

The format for the study of the development part can be visualized as follows:



4 How to use the book

1 Distribution of time

The book has been designed to last about 60 class periods of 50 minutes and it is expected that some out-of-class assignments (1 or 2 per unit) can also be given. At this rate the time would be distributed roughly as follows:

Unit 1	about 10 lessons
Units 2, 3	
4, 5	about 6 lessons each
Units 6, 7	about 8 lessons each
Unit 8	about 10 lessons.

It is not intended that each part should be the same length, nor that each part need necessarily correspond to a complete lesson or lessons. Thus a unit lasting 6 lessons might proceed as follows:

Part 1	1 lesson
Parts 2, 3	1½ lessons each
Part 4	2 lessons.

A unit lasting 8 lessons might proceed:

Part 1	1 lesson
Parts 2, 3	2 lessons each
Part 4	3 lessons.

This is, however, only a rough guide and teachers will have to find the pace which best suits their class. Two factors, however, should be borne in mind:

- 1 It is not a good idea to study many passages in greater depth than is required by the questions and activities. It is considered that at this stage students require a brisk pace and exposure to a wide range of material.
- 2 It is advisable to allow spare time for supplementary work that may prove useful and for students to discuss points of particular interest to them or which prove particularly demanding.

The amount of class work will depend on the circumstances but it will be helpful if some written work and preparation of the development passages can be done in students' own time.

2 Pattern of work

A typical unit might develop as follows:

- 1 The teacher arranges a preliminary activity to draw students' attention to the function of the unit. For example, in Unit 3 the teacher could bring to the class a camera and ask individual students to contribute ideas in order to build up a short description of how it works. This is essentially an oral activity and serves to focus students' attention on a particular type of communication. Consequently, the teacher should bear in mind a number of considerations:

- a The activity must be short (10–15 mins).

- b It is not a convenient point to teach the grammar involved. The statements offered by students may contain grammatical inaccuracies and these can be corrected by the teacher when they are written on the board. Similarly, the teacher can supply any necessary words the students are unable to provide themselves.

- c If oral participation of this nature is considered inappropriate in English, a similar preliminary activity should be introduced in the students' own language. This should be done more rapidly and the teacher can write a brief summary of the students' contributions on the board in English.

At the end of the activity the teacher points out that the unit will give further practice in understanding this type of communication, and he can also draw students' attention to some of the key concepts they have used.

- 2 The teacher will ask the students to work on Part 1. He will go round the class to make sure that students read the passage at least twice—once rapidly to answer question 1 and more intensively to answer the other comprehension questions. Encourage students to discuss their answers and ask each other when they are in doubt before they turn to the teacher. Answers will be checked orally except for tables and diagrams which should be

written up on the board. The teacher will ask the students to read the summary silently and will deal with any problems, reinforce the main points, remind students of examples which have appeared so far in the unit and ask students to find other examples. Allow a few minutes for discussion (in the native language if possible) of different answers, differences of opinion, difficulties found in the passage etc. in order to be sure that the purpose of the part has been understood.

3 The teacher will then ask students to study Part 2. Again, they will need to read the passage at least once rapidly and then more intensively to answer the comprehension questions. The summary will be treated in the same way as in Part 1 except that the teacher will focus attention on the different expressions used. He may ask for other examples but it is not advisable to drill the patterns, as controlled practice of this kind is provided in the activities. The way in which the activities are handled will depend on the nature of the teaching conditions; in particular the time available. If there is ample provision for reading support work the teacher should introduce the topic of the activity to arouse students' interest and then allow them to study the activity for a few moments. They should use a dictionary to find out the meanings of unfamiliar words which cannot be guessed at from the context or accompanying visuals, and consult the teacher about vocabulary problems which they cannot solve on their own. The teacher can then go over the examples orally and suggest others to be done by volunteers and written up on the board. The activity should then be set as a written assignment and students' work checked as they are writing. The activity can then be checked, a range of students being asked to give their answers orally. The teacher will then ask if there are alternative answers and allow students to assess these and discuss points arising from them. The teacher will act as final arbiter in cases of disagreement. If numerous errors have been made, remedial work can be given in small doses. This should be reserved, however, for cases where the *understanding* of the pattern is weak as well as the ability to produce it accurately.

If, on the other hand, time is short, the activities can be dealt with differently. It is still advisable to introduce the topic of the activity briefly, so that students are constantly accustomed to focus on the information being given and not just the expressions themselves. After the examples have been studied and the teacher is confident that the class know how to tackle the activity, individual students can give answers orally and then students can write up the activity out of class. Their work will be collected in the following period and checked.

4 Part 3 will be handled in the same way as Part 2.

5 Part 4. The teacher will conduct a rapid review of the key concepts and grammar introduced in Parts 2 and 3 and then ask the class to study the

introduction. He could then set a time limit for the purpose question (time a good, but not exceptional, student on a comparable passage and use this as an indication). During the intensive study of the passage, the teacher should encourage students to discuss the difficulties among themselves before referring them to the teacher, but the teacher should nevertheless be ready to deal with queries as they arise. It is important to bear in mind that in many cases the same question can be answered in different ways (the particular questions to which this applies are indicated in the key). Be ready to accept any plausible answer and allow students to justify their answers (if necessary in their own language). Allow time after each reading passage for a short discussion of the student's views on the information they have obtained from it—10-15 minutes should be ample.

6 If time permits, the teacher may then devise a final activity. If he wishes he can use suggestions from the detailed notes on each unit. Many courses, however, will not have the time for this so that the discussion following the reading passage should cover a brief roundup of the unit. The teacher can do this by writing students' suggestions on the board to form a brief summary of what has been studied in the unit.

3 Class management

a Bear in mind that the teacher should manage class activities so that as soon as the students are briefly oriented towards a stage of the practice they should be required to work independently of the teacher. In general, where questions and activities need to be discussed, have the students work in pairs or groups of 4-6. Where the work is mainly written consolidation have the students work individually. Bring the class together for periodic checks and to discuss and review progress. This type of work will require an informal (but businesslike) class atmosphere where students are encouraged to accept responsibility for their own learning but do not hesitate to consult the teacher when in real difficulty or doubt.

b The authors believe that a reading course does not imply a silent classroom. Encourage students to answer questions and discuss points in English. As spoken English is not the main aim of the course, however, do not over-emphasize this. Make oral parts of the lessons short—rephrase contributions which are badly expressed but do not spend time on getting students to correct their mistakes, repeat sentences or do oral drills. If possible, try and give instructions and additional explanations in English. If, however, spoken English is not appropriate, either for the students or for the course objectives, then give instructions and explanations and conduct short discussions in the native language. Even when students are willing and able to make some oral contributions in English, it is recommended that the teacher should regularly monitor progress by using the native language where possible.